

Regent's Physics and Astronomy Academic Advisory Committee Minutes of the April 4, 2008 meeting

The meeting was convened by Bill Dennis at approximately 12:45 PM with a quorum. Members present were: Chad Davies (Gordon College), Bill Dennis, Chair-elect (University of Georgia), Mariam Dittmann (Bainbridge College), Mark Edwards (Georgia Southern University), Leon Jaynes (Armstrong Atlantic State University), Tatiana Krivosheev (Clayton State University), Ntungwa Maasha (Coastal Georgia Community College), Martin Okafor (Georgia Perimeter College), Mark Pergrem (Georgia Highlands College), Bob Powell (University of West Georgia), Dick Prior (North Georgia College & State University), Michael Pangia (Georgia College & State University), J.B. Sharma (Gainesville State College), Shawn Seat (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College), Zodiac Webster (Columbus State University)

There was no formal agenda for this meeting; Bill Dennis suggested:

1. The New Core
2. Library Needs
3. Other items from the floor:
 - a. Mathematica Licenses
 - b. System-wide student learning tests
4. Election of New Officers

1. The New Core: The implementation and impact of the New Core was discussed extensively; in particular the following questions/comments/concerns were discussed:

- The number of physics credit hours in the core were reduced by 20% during the semester conversion; can these hours be added back in the new core?
- If the new core requires new courses *e.g.* process-driven courses, will new resources be available, or will this be an unfunded mandate?
- If a credit-based model is replaced by an outcome-based model, how will this impact transferability between units.
- The combination of core-curriculum, credit-hour caps on majors and high failure rates (physics is often used as a “weed-out” course by other disciplines) provides a pressure to downsize the number of physics credit hours.
- We need to emphasize and reinforce that Physics is a STEM discipline that is the “bedrock” of many other disciplines. Courses in physics provide students with a unique opportunity to obtain critical quantitative and analytical skills that will enable them to succeed in the high-tech world of the twenty-first century. Edwards and Webster will draft a Physics Promotional Statement.

2. Library Needs: The question of whether Physics journals could be added to Galileo was raised. After some discussion on particular journals the following motion was made:

- MOTION (Moved: Martin Okafor, Seconded: J.B. Sharma): That this committee recommends that AIP Journal Package be added to Galileo.

The motion was passed unanimously.

3. Other items from the floor:

a. Mathematica Licenses: The desirability of a system-wide Mathematica license was discussed, as were possible strategies for reducing the cost of such a license. The product was compared to others in wide use, *i.e.* Maple and Mathlab,

b. System-wide student learning tests: After some discussion, no recommendation was made regarding a system-wide student learning test for physics.

4. Election of officers:

Mark Edwards (Georgia Southern University) was selected as Chair-elect. The Executive Committee, in addition to Chair-elect (Mark Edwards), past and current chairs (Michael Torbett, Bill Dennis) was selected to consist of Leon Jaynes (representing the State Universities) and Mark Pergrem (representing the two-year colleges).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Mark Edwards, William M. Dennis (Chair-elect)

Georgia Southern University, University of Georgia